

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 L-03 H-01 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 PPT-01 NEA-10 PA-01 PRS-01
USIA-06 SAJ-01 /070 W
-----111808Z 006779 /47

R 111554Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2951
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0449

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, CASC
SUBJECT: EXCHANGE WITH MFA ON CONFISCATIONS BY SOVIET CUSTOMS
OFFICIALS

REF: MOSCOW 0203

1. CONSOFFS, ACCOMPANIED BY EUR/SOV'S MAHLON HENDERSON, CALLED ON
MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS BULAVIN AND ARTSYBASHEV
JAN 5 FOR DEMARCHE ON SEVERAL ISSUES, INCLUDING RECENT DETENTIONS,
SEARCHES AND CONFISCATIONS OF PROPERTY OF US CITIZENS. AFTER
DISCUSSION OF SPECIFIC ISSUES IN THESE CASES (REFTEL), CONOFFS RAISED

MORE GENERAL SUBJECT OF SOVIET DEFINITION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES ANTI-
SOVIET LITERATURE AND IS THEREFORE SUBJECT TO CONFISCATION. CONSOFF
SAID THAT EMBASSY ITSELF DID NOT KNOW WHAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES
CONSIDERED ANTI-SOVIET AND ASKED HOW AMERICAN TOURISTS, THEN,
COULD BE EXPECTED TO KNOW. HE ASKED BULAVIN AND ARTSYBASHEV TO
LOOK INTO OBTAINING A STATEMENT OF WHAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES
CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE MATERIALS.

2. ARTSYBASHEV ASKED WHETHER CONSOFFS EXPECTED SOVIET AUTHORITIES
TO BELIEVE THAT TOURISTS ARRIVING FOR ONE WEEK STAY WITH EIGHTEEN
INCH (INDICATED BY GESTURES) STACK OF BOOKS WERE BRINGING IT ALL
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FOR THEIR PERSONAL USE. CONSOFF RESPONDED BY ASKING WHETHER
IT WAS AGAINST LAW FOR SOVIET CITIZENS TO RECEIVE RELIGIOUS BOOKS.
ARTSYBASHEV'S RESPONSE WAS THAT SOVIET UNION ITSELF PUBLISHED
RELIGIOUS BOOKS FOR ITS CITIZENS, BUT OPINED, IN RESPONSE TO
FURTHER QUERY, THAT HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT IT WAS PROBABLY ILLEGAL
FOR SOVIETS TO RECEIVE SUCH BOOKS FROM FOREIGNERS.
TOON

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 11-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition History: n/a
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